

# Digital Trends Report April 2019

## Privacy is in, authority is out...

DuckDuckGo's organic search growth is outpacing other search engines, particularly in mobile search, which was up by 78%. In fact, it was the only Google competitor to gain search share. Despite this, Google produced 96% of all organic search results and, although overall organic search growth has been falling by 2% year-over-year, those on mobile are up 6% year-over-year.

-Total site visits produced by organic search declined by about 2%, producing 26% of all visits and 24% of mobile visits. Despite this, mobile organic visits were up 13% (6% for Google) and thus made up over 50% of all organic search visits in 2019 – a first-ever milestone. Meanwhile, organic search results fell by 13% on desktops, 12% on tablets. Both DuckDuckGo and Google saw mobile account for 62% of organic search visits.

**Why?** After being barred from setting itself as the default search engine in some regions and being made to enable competitors as options, Google could continue to fallout. But DuckDuckGo still has a long way to go. Privacy scandals surrounding Google over the past year aren't without impact and competitors have certainly capitalised on it – not least privacy-focused search engine DuckDuckGo. Although its advancements in organic search results and visits on mobile are impressive - considering Google having such an authority on iOS and Android - it still has a long way to go.

**What does this mean?** Mobile phones now dominating sources for organic visits means that it is more important than ever to ensure your web platforms are optimised for mobile devices.

For more info [click here](#)

## Social Media – the inspector is here

The UK government has proposed measures to regulate social media companies over harmful content, including that which promotes fake news, hate speech or extremism, or could trigger or exacerbate mental health problems. An independent regulator will have the power to issue "substantial" fines, name and shame, and block services that do not stick to the rules. It will run a consultation until 1 July on plans to create a legal "duty of care towards users". Platforms would be penalised if they failed to delete extremist content within an hour and failed to identify and remove copyright content.

**What does this mean?** This shift of responsibility will have a massive impact on the functionality and freedom of social media platforms - but not necessarily a negative one, it may instil trust and encourage user retention.

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### Facebook - everyone loves a good story

Facebook has rolled out ads for messenger stories which will appear at the top of a user's inbox and can be shared publicly with FB and/or Messenger friends - because these aren't the same thing anymore! You can buy ads with other stories ad placements or feed, offering an alternative way to reach your audience, on a fully immersive platform.

Why? 58% of people say they have become more interested in a brand or product after seeing it in Stories and the same amount say they have gone onto browsing the brand's website to get more information. You can capitalise on this by introducing story updates into your social media publishing schedule.

For more info [click here](#)

### Twitter – it's all about community

"If I started Twitter now, I would not emphasise follows and I would not create likes"

Twitter CEO, Jack Dorsey has announced that he thinks the emphasis on number of followers has produced an online atmosphere of abuse and has incentivised users "to post outrage". Twitter is thus demoting likes and follows and making a shift towards a more "interest-based network...rather than focus on following individual accounts, users could be encouraged to follow hashtags, trends and communities."

**What does this mean?** This could be good or bad for businesses. On one hand, it could be easier to target specific audiences ('communities') with certain interests - similar to Pinterest marketing. On the other, the demotion of likes and followers could limit reach and cloud analytics; you want to know who's listening and you want to know how far your tweet travelled.

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### Instagram – the Zuckerberg effect

In December, the company accidentally pushed new navigation live that made the feed horizontal instead of vertical. Instagram claimed that this content was a bug, but it is more likely they are experimenting with different formats for content. They also recently started allowing users to publish their IGTV (app owned by Instagram that allows you to post longer videos) content on their feed, which drives up viewer count but also bogs the feed down with more content. Additionally, they added features like "close friends," that lets users share their story content to a smaller group of curated people. It is also moving away from a public News Feed and toward encrypted, private messaging, as well as further streamlined shopping to build everyone their own "personalized mall."

**Why?** Ever since buying Instagram and WhatsApp, and not giving them the autonomy they wanted, there have been rumours of bad blood between Zuckerberg and the founders of the other platforms. This update only serves

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to further validate that Zuckerberg wants more control over Instagram, as well as the ability to turn the app into a closer sister to Facebook.

**What does this mean?** From this, we can infer that Instagram may well launch event features, like its sister app, or even in-app games to follow suit with Zuckerberg's updates to Facebook.

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## LinkedIn – a new data partnership

LinkedIn's partnership with Adobe will see improvements in ad targeting as it utilises data from LinkedIn, Marketo and Microsoft Dynamic 365 to gain greater insight into the audiences they need to reach and target them more effectively.

**What does this mean?** Now you can target ads to the specific decision-makers, based on job roles, locations, and more.

**In other news:** "Documents and presentations are an impactful way to share knowledge with your community and ignite richer conversations on topics you care about." - LinkedIn has also announced that all members can upload documents and presentations, including PDFs and PowerPoint presentations, directly to their feed, or within group posts.

For more info [click here](#)

## The indispensable assistant

The 2019 Microsoft study on consumer adoption of voice technology shows that most people are using voice search on smart devices and digital assistants. Here are the findings:

- 65% of people say they look up directions
- 52% of people say they search for a product or service
- 44% of people say they conduct additional research for products and services
- 31% of people say they use voice search to compare products and services
- 57% of people expect their favourite brands to have their own digital assistants within the next 5 years.

**What does this mean?** Considering this, as well as the fact that around 75% of households will have at least one smart speaker by 2020, it is important that your business is discoverable in voice search and, especially if you are a retailer, you may need to consider building their own digital assistant to work with other voice assistants.

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